including biscuit industries have been adversely affected due to wheat becoming costlier;

(b) whether it is also a fact that some small scale industries have been shut down due to this; and

(c) the steps being taken to address these problems?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAI): (a) to (c) There is no information about wheat and flour based industries including biscuit and small scale industries having shut down due to increase in wheat prices.

Setting up of a food safety and standard authority

638. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up the Food Safety and Standard Authority to oversee the entire food manufacturing and processing sectors;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is being ensured to check food adulteration;

(d) if not, the steps taken by Government to create standards and guidelines on food;

(e) whether food items imported into the country are being monitored and approved by the above authority before entry; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAI): (a) to (f) Government has introduced "Food Safety and Standards Bill, 2005" in Lok Sabha on 25.8.2005. The Bill *inter-alia* provides for establishment of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India for laying down science based standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import, to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption. One of the functions envisaged

for the Food Authority is to specify the procedure and the enforcement of quality control in relation to any article of food imported into the country.

Constraints of FPI

639. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) what are the salient features of the proposed National Policy for Food Processing;

(b) whether it is a fact that an agency has been asked to study the constraints faced by the food processing sector in the country;

(c) if so, whether the study has been completed;

(d) the major recommendations made by the agency; and

(e) the action Government have taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAI): (a) to (e) Recently Government had asked M/s. Rabo India Finance Private Limited to study *inter-alia* the constraints faced by food Processing Sector, prepare a vision for the sector and suggest strategies to achieve the same. As per their report, major constraints being faced by food processing sector are inadequate infrastructural facilities, lack of adequate quality control & testing infrastructure, inefficient supply chain, lack of processable varieties of farm produce, seasonality or raw material, high inventory carrying cost, lack of easy and concessional credit/ lending by banks, high taxation, high packaging cost, affordability, cultural preference of fresh food etc. In order to address these constraints, a draft National Policy for food Processing/Agri-business had been prepared. However, the Government has constituted a Group of Minister (GoM) for the proposal relating to promotion of agri-business vision, strategy and action plan for the food processing sector. Issues in the draft Policy stand referred to GoM.

Food processing industries in the country

604. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be please to state:

(a) the total number of food processing industries in the country including in Andhra Pradesh during the last two years;